



Code of Corporate Governance

FOREWORD

From the Chair of the Governance Committee

I am pleased to endorse this Code of Corporate Governance, which sets out the commitment of Melton Borough Council to continue to uphold the highest possible standards of good governance. I hope you will find that the document clearly demonstrates our drive to ensure this.

Good governance is key to achieving our vision for Melton.

INTRODUCTION

Good governance

Good governance is about how the Borough Council ensures that it is doing the right things, in the right way, for the communities it serves, in a timely, inclusive, open, honest and accountable manner.

Our commitment

Melton Borough Council is committed to upholding the highest possible standards of good corporate governance, believing that good governance leads to high standards of management, strong performance, effective use of resources, increased public involvement and trust in the Council and ultimately good outcomes.

Good governance flows from shared values, culture and behaviour and from systems and structures. This Code of Corporate Governance is a public statement that sets out the framework through which the Council meets its commitment to good corporate governance.

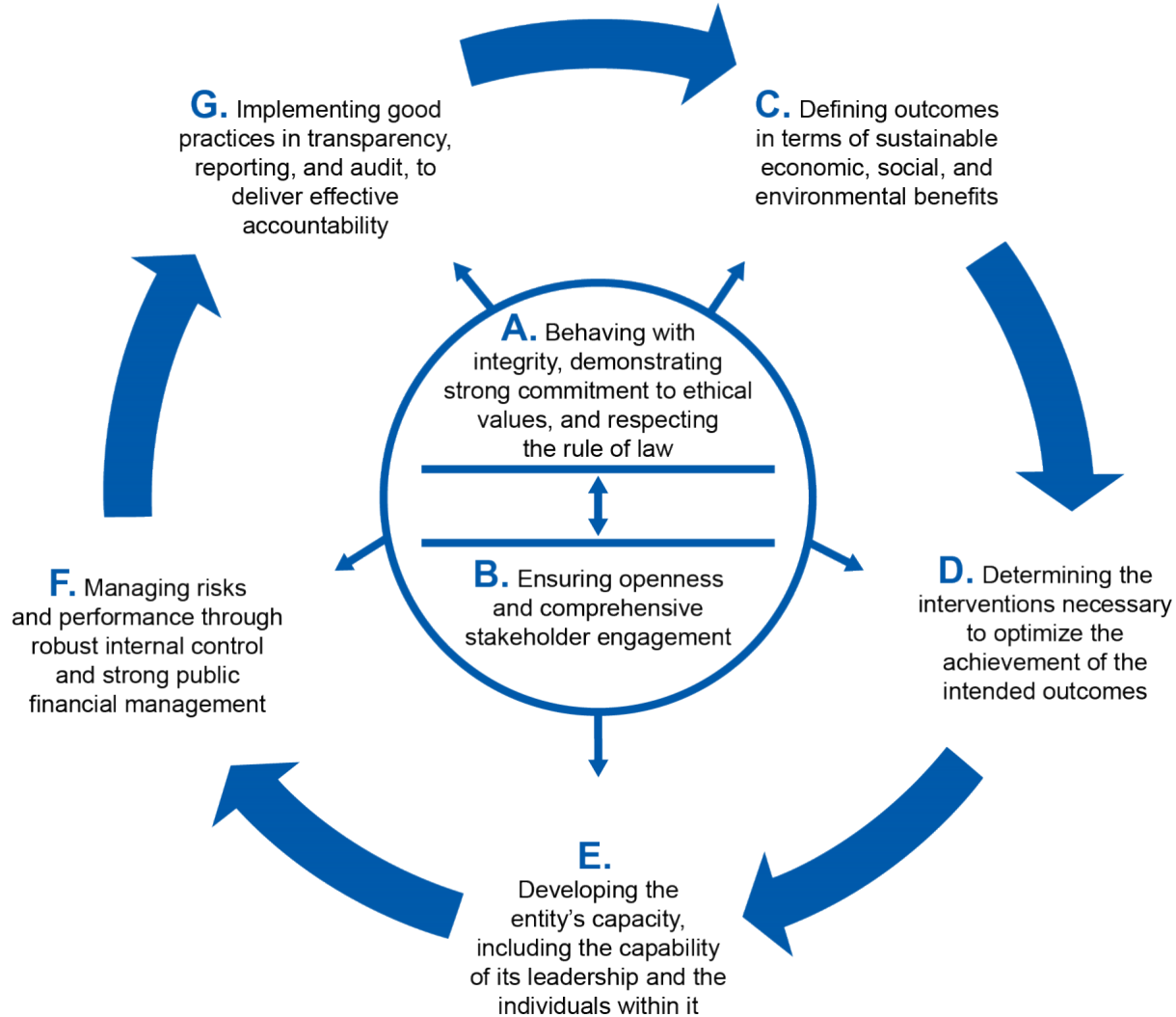
The Governance Framework comprises the systems and processes, and cultures and values, by which the Council is directed and controlled and through which it accounts to, engages with and, where appropriate, leads the community. It enables the Council to monitor the achievement of its strategic objectives and to consider whether those objectives have led to the delivery of appropriate cost-effective services.

The corporate governance of Melton is based on the following principles recommended by CIPFA/SOLACE in a joint document entitled 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' which builds on the seven Principles for the Conduct of Individuals in Public Life (Appendix A):

- A.** Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.
- B.** Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.
- C.** Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.
- D.** Determining the interventions necessary to optimize the achievement of the intended outcomes.
- E.** Developing the entity's capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it.
- F.** Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management.
- G.** Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit, to deliver effective accountability.

This document describes how the Council achieves the seven principles of good governance and describes how the Council's corporate governance arrangements will be monitored and reviewed.

Achieving the Intended Outcomes While Acting in the Public Interest at all Times



Principle A: Behaving with integrity, demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values, and respecting the rule of law.

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle:	This is evidenced by:
<p>Behaving with integrity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s leadership sets a tone for the organisation by creating a climate of openness, support and respect through its Constitution and Corporate Delivery Plan and other key policies. • The Council’s Codes of Conduct for officers and Members, and supporting guidance, communicate the expectation that Members and officers behave with integrity and lead a culture where acting in the public interest is visibly and consistently demonstrated, thereby protecting the reputation of the organisation. The Council’s Constitution (Part 5) sets out the underlying principles which underpin the Codes of Conduct, based on the Seven Principles of Public Life (the Nolan Principles). • The Council has in place a staff handbook and performance management framework, which ensures that Melton’s vision and values are communicated to, and understood by, staff. This framework forms the basis of the annual staff appraisal process. • The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that Councillors and employees of the authority are not influenced by prejudice, bias or conflicts of interest in dealing with different stakeholders, and has in place appropriate processes to ensure that they continue to operate in practice. This includes maintaining the statutory Register of Members Interests, and requiring officers to make Declarations of Interests. • The Council has in place arrangements to ensure that core corporate policies and processes are designed in conformity with ethical standards, and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they are operating effectively. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Corporate Delivery Plan • The Council’s Constitution • Members Code of Conduct • Officers Code of Conduct • Performance management framework • Staff handbook • Register of Members’ Interests • Declaration of Interest guidance • Members induction/training • Financial Regulations • Contract Procedure Rules • Scheme of Delegation • Complaints Policy • Complaints Guidance and Process • Governance Committee

<p>Demonstrating strong commitment to ethical values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Constitution establishes a clear ethical framework for the Council’s operation, and core corporate policies and procedures place emphasis on agreed ethical values. • The Council maintains a Governance Committee which reviews changes to the Constitution on an on-going basis and considers an annual review. • There are annual probity meetings between the Leader of the Council, Group Leader(s) and the Chief Executive and Monitoring Officer to discuss any issues and give guidance as necessary. • Training on ethical values is undertaken by Members and Officers on a regular basis, including an annual Ethics and Probity briefing on relevant key issues to staff as part of the Chief Executive briefings by the Monitoring Officer and Head of Internal Audit. • The Council’s Codes of Conduct and staff handbook ensures that personal behaviour is underpinned with ethical values which permeate all aspects of the organisation’s culture and operation. • The Council’s Partnership Evaluation Toolkit and Checklist sets out broad principles for partnerships and how to evaluate whether the council should enter into one. • The Council has a workforce strategy and associated action plan linked to values encouraging positive behaviours in staff. • External organisations are questioned as part of our procedures for procurement valued over £50k – such questions cover Health and safety, Modern Slavery Act, Equality and non-discrimination and Environmental management. Depending on the nature of the procurement, more specific (but ethically relevant) questions may be asked within the tender itself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Constitution • Governance Committee minutes/documents • Ethical values training (including ethics and probity briefing) • Members Code of Conduct • Officers Code of Conduct • Staff handbook • Partnership Evaluation Toolkit and Checklist • Workforce strategy and action plan • Staff training plan • Procurement Questionnaire Equality and Diversity Training for Members
<p>Respecting the rule of law</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s policies and culture set the tone for Members and staff to demonstrate a strong commitment to the rule of the law as well as adhering to relevant laws and regulations, and ensure that statutory officers, other key post holders, and Members, are able to fulfil their responsibilities in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements. • The Council maintains and implements a Whistleblowing Policy to enable employees to raise any concerns of wrongdoing in confidence and without fear of reprisal. External suppliers, members of the public and Councillors may raise any concerns about suspected illegal or illegitimate practices via the Council's formal Complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy • Fraud response plan • Anti-Bribery Policy • Anti-Money Laundering Policy • Whistleblowing Policy • Complaints Policy, guidance and process • Role of the Monitoring Officer

	<p>Procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council ensures corruption and misuse of power are dealt with effectively through the Anti-Bribery Policy, the Fraud Response Plan and the Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy.• The Council has an in house legal team and a legally qualified Monitoring Officer who support officers and members in making sure that they are committed to the rule of law.	<p>as per the Constitution.</p>
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Principle B: Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
Openness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council values openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement. Melton Borough Council has a Consultation Strategy which is used to ensure effective and appropriate consultation. • The Council’s Constitution and Forward Plan ensure that decision-making is open and there is appropriate oversight and challenge, with an organisational commitment to openness. • The Council makes decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. Committee meetings are available to the public, and minutes and papers are available to the public on the Council’s website, including regular financial and performance forecasts. If a decision needs to be kept confidential, then the justification for this is provided. • The Council’s Corporate Delivery Plan, Statements of Accounts, and key strategies are available through the Borough Council Website. • An effective Internal Audit function is resourced and maintained, with regular reporting to the Governance Committee. • The Council is committed to being transparent, accountable and to increasing the amount of data it publishes for reuse by others. The Council maintains a publication scheme listing the information available to the public as a matter of course. • The Council uses formal and informal consultation and engagement to determine the most appropriate and effective interventions/courses of action. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forward Plan • The Council’s Constitution • Committee System • Internal Audit • Governance Committee • Consultation Strategy • Publication scheme list • Freedom of Information guidance • Council Website • Corporate Delivery Plan • Statement of Accounts • Committee agendas, reports and minutes • Register of Members’ Interests

<p>Engaging comprehensively with institutional stakeholders</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council considers those institutional stakeholders to whom the authority is accountable, to ensure that the purpose, objectives and intended outcomes for each stakeholder relationship are clear so that outcomes are achieved successfully and sustainably. • The Council has established partnership working and consultation with a number of different partners and organisations including TFEC (tenants’ forum), BID (consisting of local businesses), and reference groups from the local community in relation to the Local Plan. Partnership working is demonstrated through groups such as the Community Safety Partnership and the developing Town and Place Partnership • Melton Borough Council, following the requirement to build new offices took the opportunity to shape the building of their new offices to share accommodation with other partner organisations, including for example, Job Centre Plus, Leicestershire Police, Leicestershire County Council, NHS and Citizens Advice Bureau. • Examples of consultation undertaken on major projects which have been used to shape project development have included the local plan and public conveniences • The Council aims to develop formal and informal partnerships to allow for resources to be used more efficiently and outcomes achieved more effectively. • The Council uses the partnership evaluation toolkit to assess new and existing partnerships to ensure they are monitored and effective. • Positive references to the Council’s outward looking approach identified through partner interviews as part of the Corporate Peer Challenge 2017 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership Evaluation Toolkit and Checklist • The Council’s Constitution • Consultation on Local Plan, Local Council Tax Support and Public conveniences. • Corporate Peer Challenge December 2017
<p>Engaging with individual citizens and service users effectively</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council makes decisions that are open about actions, plans, resource use, forecasts, outputs and outcomes. Committee meetings are available to the public, and minutes and papers are available to the public on the Council’s website, including regular financial and performance forecasts. If a decision needs to be kept confidential, then the justification for this is provided. • The Council consults on its Corporate Delivery Plan proposals and other key aspects of its vision, strategic plans and priorities, with the local community and other key stakeholders. The Council takes account of the impact of decisions on future generations of tax payers and service users. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation Strategy and Tool Kit • Consultation information on Council website • Complaints Policy and Process • Comments, Compliments and complaints page on Website • Govmetric • Business Ratepayer consultation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Council encourages, collects and evaluates the views and experiences of communities, citizens, service users and organisations of different backgrounds including reference to future needs. The Council maintains a customer feedback and complaints procedure to enable stakeholders to submit their views on Council performance and services.	
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Principle C: Defining outcomes in terms of sustainable economic, social, and environmental benefits.

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
Defining outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Corporate Delivery Plan forms its agreed statement of the organisation’s purpose and intended outcomes, which provides the basis for the authority’s overall strategy, planning and other decisions. The Council has recently refreshed its Mission, Vision and defines the key outcomes for the people of Melton. Specific Council strategies and policies link to the outcomes defined in the Corporate Delivery Plan. • The Corporate Delivery Plan sets out how the Council will deliver defined outcomes on a sustainable basis, within the resources that will be available. It also specifies the intended impact on, or changes for, stakeholders including citizens and service users, for the next five years. • The Performance framework set out Corporate Performance Measures which are used to assess the achievement of the Council’s outcomes. The Council’s corporate performance measures are reported to Senior Management Team quarterly , the Policy Committees bi-annually and to Full Council on an annual basis. Service performance measures are used to ensure effective operational delivery within teams • The Council publicises performance information on its website. • The Council operates a risk management system to identify and manage risks to the achievement of outcomes. The Corporate Risk Register is reported to and reviewed by the Council’s Senior Management Team on a regular basis and the Governance Committee annually. Every committee report has a section to consider the risk of recommendations made. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Delivery Plan • Senior Management Team • Risk Management Policy & Strategy • Corporate Risk Register • Statement of Accounts • Capital Strategy (in MTFP) • Corporate Performance Measures

<p>Sustainable economic, social and environmental benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council considers and balances the combined economic, social and environmental impact of policies and plans when taking decisions about service provision. The Council seeks to take a longer-term view with regard to decision-making, which takes account of risks. • Consultation is undertaken for the key proposals included in the Council’s Corporate Delivery Plan, which identify the impact of decisions on different groups within the communities affected by the proposals. • The Council seeks to determine the wider public interest associated with balancing conflicting interests between achieving the various economic, social and environmental benefits, through consultation where possible, in order to ensure appropriate trade-offs. • The Council identifies and monitors corporate performance indicators, which demonstrate performance against the Council’s planned outcomes and how benefits are being delivered. • The Council maintains a prudential financial framework, balancing commitments with available resources and monitoring income and expenditure levels to ensure a sustainable balance is achieved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Delivery Plan • Annual Statement of Accounts • External Auditors reports • Engagement surveys • Consultation Strategy • Corporate Delivery Plan • Directorate Delivery Plans • Corporate Performance measures
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Principle D: Determining the interventions necessary to optimise the achievement of the intended outcomes.

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle:	This will be evidenced by:
<p>Determining interventions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melton Borough Council has formal decision making meetings of Full Council, Committees and Sub Committees. These are supported by appropriate working groups, task groups and officer groups as necessary. Decision making is delegated to Committees and officers as appropriate and documented clearly in the Council’s constitution. • Feedback is obtained through the consultation processes and through audit reports, complaints and website feedback. Planning interventions are managed through project management techniques. The Council also has established Working Groups and in addition engages with outside bodies including the Melton Community Partnership and a local BID. • The Council has a corporate policy framework with overarching strategies including the Community Strategy, Corporate Delivery Plan, People Strategy and Medium Term Financial Strategy. The Corporate Delivery Plan consolidates previous Service Plans into one corporate document. Further support is provided from Directorate Delivery Plans and Partner Strategies. • The Council’s Corporate Project Management process incorporates business cases for proposed projects and savings, ensuring decision makers receive objective and rigorous analysis of a variety of options for achieving outcomes, indicating how intended outcomes would be achieved and associated risks. This ensures best value is achieved, however services are provided. • The Council’s Consultation strategy and toolkit ensures that decision-makers consider feedback from citizens and service users when making decisions about service improvements or where services are no longer required, in order to prioritise competing demands within limited resources available including people, skills, land 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Management toolkit • Project Management Boards • Corporate policy framework (including all associated strategies and plans). • Business Cases • Consultation Strategy • Consultation Toolkit • Website feedback reports • Committee System

	and assets and bearing in mind future impacts.	
Planning interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has an established annual Business Planning process which sets a strategic plan for the Council that informs the development of strategic and operational plans, priorities and targets. The Corporate Delivery Plan is reviewed annually meaning that mechanisms for delivering outcomes are regularly reviewed and can be adapted to changing circumstances. • The Corporate Delivery Plan incorporates medium term resource planning, including changes to revenue and capital expenditure. Budgets are prepared in accordance with the Council’s objectives, strategies and the Corporate Plan. • The Performance Framework establish appropriate corporate performance measures as part of the planning process in order to identify how the performance of services and projects is to be measured. The Council ensures that capacity exists to generate the information required to review service quality regularly. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Planning process • Corporate Delivery Plan • Performance Balanced Scorecard System • Consultation Strategy • Directorate Delivery Plans • Corporate Performance Measures
Optimising achievement of intended outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Corporate Delivery Plan sets the context for ongoing decisions on significant delivery issues or responses to changes in the external environment that may arise during the budgetary period, in order for outcomes to be achieved while optimizing resource usage. • Achievement of Corporate Delivery Plan outcomes is monitored and reported to the Council’s Project Boards and Senior Management Team and through to the Policy Forum and Policy Committees. With regular monitoring of the Council’s financial position including the Budget Management Strategy this enables financial and business planning to be considered alongside each other. The council is developing a range of savings to assist should the financial position worsen or members wish to free up resources for investment elsewhere. The Council maintains a robust system of risk management which identifies risks to the achievement of the Council’s intended outcomes and puts in place mitigating actions to support achievement. • The Council maintains systems of business continuity and emergency planning to deal with failures in service delivery or emergencies which may threaten achievement of the Council’s intended outcomes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Delivery Plan • Risk Management policy and strategy • Corporate Risk Register • Senior Management Team • Business continuity plans • Emergency planning • Budget Management Strategy • Corporate Peer Challenge – Reference to Plan B

Principle E: Developing the entity’s capacity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals within it

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<p>Developing the entity’s capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Melton Borough Council maintains up to date HR policies and procedures and invests in the development and training of its staff and Members to maximise outputs and productivity to meet organisational needs. • The Council maintains robust recruitment and selection processes to ensure that the Council is able to attract suitable candidates, ensuring a diverse workforce that will add value to the organisation. • There is a formal staff appraisal process linked to the Council’s values and a training plan is in place. Coaching circles and a local management development scheme are in operation targeted at third tier managers to improve skills and develop staff to meet challenges ahead. • Member development is given high priority and is supported by a Member development steering group consisting of experienced Councillors. There are training budgets for staff and Members. A Member Induction programme has been established which includes the offer of training need assessments. • The Council has a full Constitution which includes the scheme of delegations to officers and terms of reference for each committee and member groups including task groups and working groups. • The Workforce Strategy is an important tool to develop our the Councils capacity. • The Council recognises the benefits of partnerships and collaborative working where added value can be achieved. • The Council reviews its operations, performance and use of assets on a regular basis to ensure their continuing effectiveness, and seeks to improve resource use through appropriate application of techniques such as benchmarking and other options, in order to determine how resources are allocated so that defined outcomes are achieved effectively and efficiently. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection policies and procedures • Coaching circles and local management development scheme • Member development steering group • Member induction programme • Corporate Delivery Plan • Business planning process • Corporate Risk Register • Asset management plan and capital strategy • Asset register • Capital Programme • Workforce Strategy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The council has developed a Workforce strategy and associated action plan following full engagement with the staff. This sets out how the council will ensure it retains a well trained and motivated workforce that meets the council's needs.	
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<p>Developing the capability of the entity's leadership and other individuals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Council's Constitution and scheme of delegation set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of Full Council, senior officers and individual Members. The scheme of delegation clarifies the type of decisions that are delegated and those reserved for collective decision making of the governing body. Committee terms of references set out a clear statement of the respective roles and responsibilities of the Council's Committees. This ensures that a shared understanding of roles and objectives is maintained. ● The Council maintains protocols to ensure effective communication between Council Members and officers in their respective roles. ● The Chief Finance Officer is a member of the Senior Management Team and thus has direct access to the Chief Executive and other members of the leadership team. ● The Council develops the capabilities of Members, senior management and officers to achieve effective leadership and to enable the organisation to respond successfully to changing legal and policy demands as well as economic, political and environmental changes and risks, by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensuring Members and staff have access to appropriate induction tailored to their role, and that ongoing training is available and encouraged; ➤ Ensuring Members and officers have the appropriate skills, knowledge, resources and support to fulfil their roles and responsibilities and ensuring that they are able to update their knowledge on a continuing basis; ➤ Holding staff to account through regular performance reviews which take account of training or development needs; ➤ Ensuring personal, organisational and system-wide development through shared learning, including lessons learnt from governance weaknesses both internal and external; and ➤ Ensuring arrangements are in place to maintain the health and wellbeing of the workforce, and support individuals in maintaining their own physical and mental wellbeing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Council's Constitution ● Scheme of delegation ● Committee Terms of Reference ● Members Code of Conduct ● Officers Code of Conduct ● Protocol on Member/Officer Relations ● Induction Policy ● Corporate Induction ● Members Induction Programme ● Ongoing Member Training ● Performance Appraisal/PADP Scheme ● Role of Internal Audit ● CFO member of SMT ● Intranet updates for health and wellbeing activities taking place ● Health and Wellbeing updates through emails ● Stress policy ● Stress guidance for managers ● Employee assistance programme ● Personal safety advice for Members
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Principle F: Managing risks and performance through robust internal control and strong public financial management

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
Managing risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council maintains a robust risk management framework that is an integral part of its operational service delivery and its decision making process. In order to achieve this, an up to date and regularly reviewed Risk Management policy and Strategy will be maintained. This requires that both service and corporate risk registers are maintained with appropriate action plans to mitigate and manage identified risks. • Risk management is also required to be an integral part of the decision making process through being considered as part of all committee reports and as part of the Council’s project management appraisal process. • Regular training is delivered to officers and Members on risk management as appropriate. Risk management responsibility falls within the remit of the Council’s Governance Committee indicating its importance within the context of good governance. • The Council has a performance management framework which is regularly reported to Policy Forum, Policy Committees and to Full Council.. • Melton Borough Council has a data quality policy which is linked to the performance framework and information sharing documents that were created with Leicestershire County Council and includes the incident reporting process and training modules for staff. • The Council ensures that there is strong financial management in order for the Council to deliver against its corporate objectives. There are regular reports to Members on the Council’s financial position. • The Council looks to set a balanced budget with a regularly reviewed and reported Medium Term Financial Plan. The adequacy of reserves and balances are regularly reviewed. The financial implications of proposals will be considered and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management Policy and Strategy • Service Risk registers • Corporate Risk Register • Governance Committee • Project Management Appraisal Process • Risk Reports to Committees • Project Management toolkit

	<p>reported to Members as part of their decision making processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial training will be delivered to officers and Members as appropriate to their role. • Financial Procedure Rules will be maintained in order to provide guidance on financial issues. • Finance briefings are delivered annually to Budget Holders and as part of the Chief Executives' staff briefings as required to ensure all staff have an appropriate level of knowledge of the council's financial position. 	
<p>Managing performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members and senior management are provided with regular reports on performance and progress towards outcome achievement. • The Council makes decisions based on relevant, clear objective analysis and advice pointing out the implications and risks inherent in the organisation's financial, social and environmental position and outlook. • The Council encourages effective and constructive challenge and debate on policies and objectives, to support balanced and effective decision making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Management Framework • Corporate Delivery Plan • Directorate Delivery Plan • Corporate Performance Measures • Member's bulletin • Committee agendas, reports and minutes • Customer feedback • Internal Audit Reports
<p>Robust internal control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council ensures effective counter fraud, anti-corruption and anti-money laundering arrangements are in place. • Additional assurance on the overall adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control is provided by Internal Audit. • The Governance Committee is accountable to the Council, and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ provides a further source of effective assurance regarding arrangements for managing risk and maintaining an effective control environment; and ➤ Ensures that its recommendations are acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counter-fraud and corruption policy • Fraud response plan • Anti-money laundering policy • Internal Audit • Internal Audit Annual Report • Annual Governance Statement • Risk management policy and strategy • Corporate Risk Register • Governance Committee

<p>Managing data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s information governance policies and procedures ensure that effective arrangements are in place for the safe collection, storage, use and sharing of data, including processes to safeguard personal data. • The Council’s Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) has lead responsibility to ensure that organisational information risks are properly identified and managed. • The Council ensures effective arrangements are in place and operating effectively when sharing data with other bodies. • The Director for Legal and Democratic Services oversees data management and is ensuring that FOI process and in line with legislative requirements • The Data Protection Officer is a qualified solicitor and the in house legal team will be able to add expertise to requests for information and data handling. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Protection Policy • Freedom of Information Log • Information requests Procedure (FOI/EIR) • ICT Security Policy • Data loss procedure and data protection guidelines • Document retention guidelines • Senior Information Risk Owner • GDPR
<p>Strong public financial management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council ensures that its financial management supports both long term achievement of outcomes and short-term financial and operational performance. • The Council ensures well-developed financial management is integrated at all levels of planning and control, including management of financial risks and controls. • The Council ensures that officers with a role in financial management are provided with documentation to ensure support for robust public financial management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Procedure Rules • Corporate Delivery Plan • Business Planning Process • Budget Manual • Budget Management Strategy • Corporate Peer Challenge 2017

Principle G: Implementing good practices in transparency, reporting, and audit to deliver effective accountability

Supporting Principles	To meet the requirements of this Principle;	This will be evidenced by:
<p>Implementing good practice in transparency</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Governance Committee acting as the Council’s Audit Committee will receive regular reports from the Internal and External Auditor and will consider progress made against audit recommendations. The Committee will receive and consider the Annual Governance Statement and any external/peer reviews as appropriate. • A regularly reviewed suite of documents are in place supporting the governance framework and contained in the Council’s Constitution including the Council’s Counter Fraud and Corruption Strategy, Whistle Blowing Policy and Anti Money Laundering Policy. • The Council seeks to write and communicate reports and other information for the public and other stakeholders in a fair, balanced and understandable style appropriate to the intended audience and ensuring that they are easy to access and interrogate. • The Council complies with the Local Government Transparency Code and publishes information required in a timely manner. • The Council provides appropriate information to the public to ensure transparency, striking a balance between providing the right amount of information to satisfy transparency demands and enhance public scrutiny, while not being too onerous to provide and for users to understand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee agendas, papers and minutes • Council website • Publication Scheme • Forward plan

<p>Implementing good practice in reporting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s Annual Governance Statement ensures robust arrangements for assessing the extent to which the principles contained in this framework have been applied, and the results of this assessment are published. • The Council ensures that the performance information that accompanies the financial statements is prepared on a consistent and timely basis and the statements allow for comparison with other, similar organisations. • The Council maintains open and effective mechanisms for documenting evidence for decisions and recording the criteria, rationale and considerations on which decisions are based. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Accounts • Annual Governance Statement • Annual External Audit report and letter • Internal Audit reports • Committee agendas, reports and minutes
<p>Assurance and effective accountability</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council maintains an effective Governance Committee and ensures that an effective Internal Audit function, with direct access to Members, is resourced and maintained. The Internal Audit service provide assurance with regard to governance arrangements and verify that recommendations are acted upon. • The Council ensures that recommendations for corrective action made by External Audit are acted upon. • Melton Borough Council welcomes peer challenge, reviews and inspections from regulatory bodies, as a result of which action plans are identified to implement recommendations. • When working in partnership, the Council ensures that arrangements for accountability are clear and the need for wider public accountability has been recognised and met. • Need to refer to Corporate Peer Challenge here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance Committee • Role of Internal Audit • Peer reviews • Results of external inspections (ICO etc.) • Risk management policy and strategy • Council meetings • Partnership evaluation toolkit and checklist • Corporate Peer Challenge 2017

MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Council will undertake an annual review of its governance arrangements to ensure continuing compliance with best practice to provide assurance that corporate governance arrangements are adequate and operating effectively in practice. Where reviews of the corporate governance arrangements have revealed gaps, actions will be planned to enhance the governance arrangements accordingly.

The Council will prepare an Annual Governance Statement which will be submitted to the Governance Committee for consideration and will form part of the Council's annual Financial Statement.

The Governance Statement will include:

- an acknowledgement of responsibility for ensuring there is a sound system of governance (incorporating the system of internal control) and reference to the authority's code of governance;
- a reference to and assessment of the effectiveness of key elements of the governance framework and the role of those responsible for the development and maintenance of the governance environment;
- an opinion on the level of assurance that the governance arrangements can provide and that the arrangements continue to be regarded as fit for purpose in accordance with the governance framework;
- a reference to how issues raised in the previous year's annual governance statement have been resolved; and
- a conclusion including a commitment to monitoring implementation as part of the next annual review.

The Annual Governance Statement will be signed by the Chair of the Governance Committee and the Chief Executive on behalf of the Council.

In reviewing and approving the Annual Governance Statement, Members will be provided with detailed information regarding the effectiveness of the governance arrangements and system of internal control and how these address the key risks faced by the Council. Those Assurances will be available from a wide range of sources, including internal and external audit, a range of external inspectorates and managers from across the Council.

The Council will continually strive to operate an assurance framework, embedded into its business processes, that maps corporate objectives to risks, controls and assurances. This framework and regular reports on its application and effectiveness will provide Members with assurances to support the Annual Governance Statement and will help Members to identify whether corporate objectives and significant business risks are being properly managed.

APPENDIX A

Seven principles for the conduct of individuals in public life

The governance framework is supported by the seven **Principles of Public Life**, which set the standards of conduct and behaviour to which Councillors and employees should aspire in their day-to-day dealings (annexed to the **Members' Code of Conduct**).

1. Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

2. Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

3. Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

4. Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office

5. Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

6. Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

7. Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.